



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

months I have been almost wholly confined to my bed, and God only knows when the disease will take a favourable turn. It is a fever of the most malignant kind that I am suffering from. The whole of my party have been invalids from the same cause, and some have even died of the effects.

It was my intention to have traced the course of this river northward for some distance, and then to strike out for Benguela. Every preparation was made for the attempt, when, alas! all my plans were frustrated by the whole of my men being laid prostrate by the terrible fever from which I am still suffering. My regret was naturally extreme at being thus unexpectedly compelled to abandon an undertaking which just then seemed to promise every success.

My retreat to Damaraland is at present completely cut off from want of water. There are no natural springs in this country. I must wait at least four months before the rains fall."

A report from Cape Town stated that in consequence of Anderson's forlorn condition, Mr. F. Green intended to start from Damaraland immediately to his assistance, and hoped to reach him by the end of October. Mr. Green expected to be on his way back about the end of December, if not earlier.

SIR GEORGE GREY, F.R.G.S., Governor of the Cape, said he was totally ignorant of that part of the country where Mr. Andersson was, and he did not feel qualified to say much regarding it. The only point in the paper which struck him was the character given of the people of the interior. Now he did not feel certain in his own mind that the Makololo tribes were as bad as Mr. Andersson conceived. That gentleman had heard only the story of one tribe; could he have sat as an impartial judge, and have heard the reasons which induced the Makololo to attack the people in question, he would probably have heard some defence in justification of their conduct. He was himself the more inclined to believe this from the conclusion of Mr. Andersson's letter; for the impression left upon his mind was, that he was very doubtful of the character of the tribe amongst whom Mr. Andersson found himself. From his own knowledge of the connexions of the Makololo, he really believed that they were as good as any African tribe with which we were acquainted. Mr. Andersson was a man of energetic character, devoted to his duty, and receiving no adequate reward for his labours; and it struck him that it would be a graceful act on the part of this Society to convey to Mr. Andersson some expression of sympathy and regret for the state in which he was unfortunately left. To persons at a distance the recognition of their services, and sympathy for their sufferings, produced a much greater effect than those who lived at home could imagine.

---

The second Paper read was—

2. *On the Congo.* By Captain N. B. BEDINGFELD, R.N., F.R.G.S.

11, Portsea Place, Connaught Square, Jan. 19, 1860.

At a time when such efforts are being made to open out the interior of Africa to the benefits of legal commerce and civilization, it has

occurred to me that the Congo river is well worthy the attention of the Royal Geographical Society.

In the first place, in addition to its being so much nearer England than the Zambesi (within a month by steamer), the dangers of the Cape of Good Hope and the Mozambique Channel are also avoided. *It has no bar*, having 150 fathoms water at its mouth. It is navigable for sea-going ships nearly 100 miles, either under sail or steamer. I myself took H.M.S. *Pluto*, drawing 9 feet, to Embomma and back with very little trouble. H.M.S. *Antelope* and *Medusa* have also ascended as far as Punto de Lenha, the latter vessel drawing 12 feet, in the month of August, when the river is at its lowest. Should the trade ever be developed, it is within reach of the West African packets, and I also hear a Portuguese line is now established to Loanda, touching the islands of St. Thomas and Prince's; provisions are abundant and cheap; natives friendly; and I believe with very little encouragement they might be induced to cultivate ground-nuts (of which considerable quantities are even now exported), or anything else likely to pay, to a much larger extent than they do at present. They could also collect palm-oil, copper ore, ivory, gum, and beeswax. Cotton grows everywhere as on the east coasts; there is also lignum vitæ above the rapids. At Punto de Lenha, about 30 miles above Shark Point, there are numerous factories, and room for more if the bush were cleared away; vessels here lie in deep water alongside the wharves for loading and unloading; it is tolerably healthy, and a few miles above this point the mangrove ends, and high land commences. The factors here state that the wild cotton, growing in abundance, is of good quality, and easily separated from the seed; it produces two crops a year (I should mention that at Loanda, only 200 miles south of this, cotton is exported, and its cultivation encouraged by the present governor). They also state that the islands in this part of the river, some of them of considerable size, are well suited for its cultivation.

The village of Embomma is situated on a hill, and is admirably adapted for a trading settlement; there are also several factories of the Portuguese; a large market is held here once a week, and it is the central dépôt for slaves. The French have established there factories on a large scale for the emigration scheme at the mouth of the river, opposite Shark Point, and they were to have had a small steamer to ply between Tench Point and Embomma, to bring down the so-called emigrants.

The country round Embomma is the granary for the slave factories along the country and the coast to the north of the river; it

produces corn, farinha, beans, and almost every European vegetable in abundance, and Lieut. J. W. Pike, R.N., saw at one of the Portuguese factories a vine bearing excellent grapes. That gentleman is lately returned from the Congo, and I am indebted to him for much information respecting the present state of the river.

I believe there has been no attempt to explore this river above the rapids since that of Captain Tuckey in 1815; the sickness and mortality in this expedition at first sight seem alarming, and may have been partly the reason why no effort has since been made. A careful perusal of Professor Smith's Journal (who accompanied Captain Tuckey) will, however, show good cause why it should not be so.

The treatment of African fever was at that time little known; blood-letting and calomel to salivation seem to have been resorted to. Free use of palm-wine, liberty to run about amongst the swamps, or sleep in the dews at night or in the negro huts, with excesses in another way sure to tell in an African climate, together with over-fatigue, will readily account for the great mortality. I believe the Congo to be as healthy as any other river in Africa, and the peculiar dryness of the atmosphere, mentioned by Professor Smith, would make it likely to be more so.

This expedition seems to have arrived in the river at the very worst time for exploring, viz. when it was at its very lowest, and they were consequently obliged to travel by land, and endure much more fatigue than would otherwise have been the case. At that time they estimated the largest rapid, that of Yallata, to be a fall of 30 feet in 300 yards; 17 days later the river had risen 7 feet, with no perceptible difference in the current; the rise in the wet season seems to be in the narrows between 12 and 15 feet, but at Ponto de Lenha it is only 5 or 6 feet.

We are led to believe that the Congo flows through a very rich country capable of the highest cultivation, with abundance of water independent of the river itself. Professor Smith thus speaks of it at the point at which they were obliged to turn back owing to the sickness of their party: "We are at the beginning of a country evidently capable of extensive cultivation, with a fine navigable river, abundance of provisions for sale, and an increased population." Captain Tuckey, also speaking of the river a little lower down, but above the rapids, says—"It is a magnificent river, three miles wide, with the most beautiful scenery equal to anything on the banks of the Thames."

The Zambesi, for many reasons, will never prove a good outlet for the produce of the interior, for it is not navigable for sea-going

ships, and it is, I fear, a fact that the Portuguese will throw great difficulties in the way of trade ; at present they do not allow foreign merchants to go above Quillimane, and the duties there are enormous. We should therefore, I think, look for another river open to free-trade, and such the Congo offers to us. The immense body of water flowing from it all the year round, the rich tract of country through which it must pass, the probability that it would lead us near some of the long-disputed snow-capped mountains, and the little information we have of that part of Africa, make it I conceive worthy the consideration of the Society, if an expedition could not be sent out at small expense to ascertain, in the first place, if the river is navigable for 600 miles above the rapids, as reported by the slave-traders, and if so, whether an easy path could not be found from Embomma to a spot above the rapids, mentioned by Captain Tuckey as admirably adapted as a station for the further exploration of the river.

I firmly believe this could be done, and also that canoes of a certain construction might, without much difficulty, be taken above the rapids for the purpose.

Commanders Hunt and Moresby ascended the river in their boats as far as the first rapid in January, 1857. They had not much difficulty, for although they estimated the distance to be 130 miles, they were only six days going and returning ; they describe the weather as so delightfully cool that they could dispense with awnings in the day-time. They had no sickness whatever.

Should an expedition be sent out, it would of course require mature consideration as to the best plan of proceeding. I should propose a small schooner yacht that would carry out, in addition to provisions and presents necessary, a small cargo for the purpose of trade, as you would thereby encourage the natives, and at the same time by bringing home a return cargo considerably lessen the expense of the expedition. Two canoes in sections (of the same material as our steam-launch in the Zambesi was constructed) should be sent in her ; each section light enough for four men to carry overland at parts of the river it might be found dangerous to drag them through. Crews for them might be hired ; the Katenda men are excellent boatmen, very similar to our Kroomen ; the pay should be made to depend upon their conduct during the trip. The schooner should not ascend above Embomma, and I apprehend there could be little difficulty in keeping up communication with her, and thus to Fernando Po, and to England by the African packets.

An expedition should arrive in the river about the end of Sep-

tember, so that there is ample time should it be deemed a subject worthy of consideration.

Mr. J. J. MONTEIRO said—I have heard with great pleasure Captain Bedingfeld's proposition for an expedition to the River Congo.

I consider this proposition as a most important one in many respects, and which, if carried out, will be productive of the greatest benefits to Africa and to commerce. It will be the means of obtaining correct and reliable information on questions of the utmost importance, and at present very prominently attracting attention. I allude more particularly to the suppression of the slave trade, and to the magnificent capabilities of the whole of Angola for the production, on any scale, of cotton of the finest quality. That the hot, damp climate of Angola is essentially suited to the cultivation of cotton is evident from its growing luxuriantly on soils and under circumstances of very great variety. I have seen it growing abundantly, though not with equal facility, perhaps, on the stony soil of the mica and quartz rock, and on that of the mica schist and clay slate, from Ambriz to Bembe, as well as on the calcareous tufa and trap rocks of the country traversed by Livingstone, and on which I have travelled as far as the farthest limits of the province of Cam-bambe, and within a day's journey of Pungo Andongo. In these parts it is produced in great abundance, and the blacks are everywhere seen spinning it, as described by Livingstone. I saw it also growing abundantly on the banks of the River Quanga, down which I returned to the coast from above the important "quitanda" or fair of Dondo. From these circumstances we may be certain that the rich banks of the Congo must also be eminently suitable to the cultivation of cotton.

From my knowledge of the "Mussurongos" and other negroes of that locality, I do not, I am sorry to say, anticipate any commercial advantages soon to result from this expedition; but I do anticipate most important and valuable results from its observations on that hot-bed of the slave trade. This expedition will inform you how the negroes of that country love the slave trade above all others, and how perfectly impossible it is to induce them to cultivate cotton, ground-nuts, or other produce, so long as the traffic in slaves exists, and how impossible it is to abolish this horrid traffic in human flesh and blood without a firm occupation of the principal points on that river and coast, and that then only can commercial enterprise with any safety be established, and civilization or Christianity be introduced amongst the scoundrelly negroes that at present unfortunately occupy that fine coast.

As my contribution towards the realization of this expedition, I beg to offer you a few suggestions, the result of nearly two years' experience at Ambriz and Bembe, a couple of degrees to the south of the Congo. In the first place, the expedition should arrive at the river from the middle to the end of May, and not later, if possible; that is to say, immediately after the rainy season. September, as proposed by Captain Bedingfeld, would be the very worst time to arrive at the coast, the rainy season commencing about October and ending, as I have said, about the middle of May. This is subject, of course, to slight variations, but from May to October may be safely taken as the dry season. Again, in September, all the rivers on that coast are at their lowest level, and the rainy season, then about to commence, is the unhealthiest for Europeans, though the best for the blacks, on account of the terrific heat. The dry season is cool, excessively damp, misty, and comparatively sunless, particularly towards the higher interior country. The rivers in May are, of course, full; and, though the current may be stronger, it is better than having to rot anywhere on the banks of the river, as it is not possible to travel during the rainy season. I do not say it could not be done, as I have myself travelled during the rainy season, and I do not believe one constitution in a hundred

could do it. A very great preservative of health on that coast is to keep constantly moving or at work; any cessation of labour or travelling is soon attended with attacks of fever. Flannel next the skin is considered absolutely necessary on the coast; over it we found a loose dress of blue baize very useful against the dampness and coolness of the dry season.

For ascending the river there is no necessity whatever for a yacht schooner or anything of the kind. On the Coast or at Punto de Lenha, where the Portuguese, English, and American factories are established, a "lancha" or a "palhabote" could easily be hired, and the best possible conveyance to the rapids above. Beyond that, I do not believe anything better for exploring can be employed than the large native canoes.

Not the least opposition to the expedition need be apprehended from the Portuguese slave traders; on the contrary, I think they would be very glad that a party of Englishmen should risk their lives and money to open a road into the interior, and induce the natives to bring down their produce, in the expectation of an increased and cheaper supply of slaves, and because they well know how innocent to their horrid interests are the efforts of Englishmen, who, with a great flourish of representing the power and majesty of England, attempt, single-handed, to put down this detestable traffic on immense coasts, where the natives are the greatest slave-dealers (enabling them, as they say, to be rich without working, and always as drunk as they please), and who call on the weak and powerless authorities to do that which a whole British squadron is unable to effect.

ARCHDEACON MACKENZIE said, of the two communications which had been read, the one relating to the Congo was the more interesting to himself. That river, possessing as it did a better mouth and a better harbour than any other river south of the Equator in Africa, certainly seemed to offer a great opening into the interior. But instead of giving up the Zambesi mission, as the paper recommended, he would suggest another mission to the country of the Congo as well. He did not see how they could interfere with each other, for they would be far apart, there being a distance of two thousand miles across from sea to sea.

MR. CRAWFURD, F.R.G.S., called attention to the improvement which had been effected in the breed of sheep and in the quality of wool produced at the Cape through the exertions of Sir George Grey, and then expressed his concurrence in the views of Captain Bedingfeld respecting the superiority of the Congo over the Zambesi as a commercial route into the interior of Africa. Captain Bedingfeld had seen both rivers, and ought to be a better judge of their respective capabilities than persons at home or those who had seen but one of them. The Zambesi was not really, commercially speaking, a navigable river at all, while the Congo certainly was. What Captain Bedingfeld said about cotton might be set aside, for it was idle to suppose that savages would ever cultivate it so as to render it valuable for commercial purposes. Such had never happened. But there were many things they could produce, and among them was the ground-nut, which produced an excellent oil. Still more important was the palm, from which we obtained the now well-known palm-oil. This oil was more valuable than olive-oil itself, and we imported 20,000 tons of it in 1858, of the value of one and a half million sterling. The cultivation of this palm—the *Elais Guiniensis* of botanists—has done more towards the suppression of slavery than all the navies of France, England, and America put together; for the slave-trade had already actually ceased where the trade in palm-oil was most active. Other reasons why he thought the Congo superior to the Zambesi for the operations of Englishmen were, that the West Coast of Africa was more fertile, and the natives were more civilised than on the east coast, while the distance was not above one half from our own shores.

MR. MACQUEEN, F.R.G.S., shortly observed that the river Okovango, mentioned by Mr. Andersson, is the river named by the Portuguese the Cubango, and is the parent stream of the Chobe, which passes Linyanti to the Leambaye. Mr. Andersson must have struck the Okovango in about  $17^{\circ} 30'$  s. lat. and  $19^{\circ} 20'$  E. long., from which point will be, as he says, twenty days' journey north-west to its source in the high lands south-west of Bihe. The watershed between the Atlantic and the Northern Ocean is in about  $18^{\circ} 40'$  E. long. The country to the south of the middle Cubango is very woody; and during the wet season a great volume of water runs eastward to the Tioghe, which river communicates with the Cubango or Chobe in Libebe. There is no river in those parts called Embarah. This name is a corruption of the word Aunbire, the name of a chief who resides on the Upper Cubango. With regard to the Congo, it is for a very considerable part of its lower course impracticable for navigation by reason of cataracts and fearful rapids that no vessel could venture to stand. These commence at about 110 geog. miles from its mouth, and over a distance of about 120 miles up the river, which in this instance rushes through a rocky ridge of no great height, everywhere consisting of very barren land. Where Tuckey left the river, in  $3^{\circ} 40'$  s. lat., and  $15^{\circ} 30'$  E. long., the river was 3 miles broad,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms deep, with a current of 3 miles an hour, on the 4th of September, just at the very time when the river was beginning slowly to swell from the rains, a proof, be it observed, that its extreme source lies at a considerable distance on the northern Torrid Zone, in about  $9^{\circ} 30'$  N. lat., and where we find from some authorities it really is, and not far from Nunga. The mighty stream above mentioned is at one place, nearly in the centre of the rapids, confined within 25 yards in breadth, between towering rocks which form its borders. Here it is evident the current must be, as it really is, terrific. How far the river is smooth and navigable above the point where Tuckey left it is doubtful; but it is almost certain that in its more distant parts, towards its source, the stream, like all other African rivers in those parts, runs over rapids and cataracts. Branches of the Upper Congo descend westward and south-westward of the high lands which give birth to the western affluents of the White Nile, especially one large branch flowing near the Equator. An abstract of a remarkable journey, or rather of repeated journeys, by an American gentleman, from the missionary station near the mouth of the Gaboon to a great distance into the interior, has lately come in my way. He explored the country lying between  $4^{\circ}$  s. lat. and  $4^{\circ}$  to  $5^{\circ}$  N. lat., and to a great distance into the interior. It is all very woody, but in many places level plains; and to the north, he says, it is bounded by the range of the Crystal Mountains, a continuation of the very high land extending eastwards from the high peak of the Cameroons. When the full accounts of these journeys arrive, they will be found to be exceedingly interesting. The travels extended over several thousand miles. The river Oggawai, marked on my map of Africa, has a long course from the interior, above 350 miles. It enters the sea at Cape Lopez by several mouths. A French traveller had penetrated above 300 miles into the interior in this quarter of Africa. A French ship had been up the river just mentioned 180 miles. From this quarter of Africa is probably the best course to take to reach the Upper Congo. The interior could be reached by land on the south side of the Congo, and through a fine healthy country; but this for the present may be considered impracticable, because a formidable rebellion has lately broken out against the Portuguese authority at St. Salvador, the capital of the kingdom of Congo. Against this place all the Portuguese forces in Angola, naval and military, were, at the date of the latest accounts, collecting and marching. Till strife is settled, travelling in those parts of Africa will be unsafe and dangerous.

---